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were closed." The fourth charter was voted at the same time as the general election and less than 34,000 people voted for and against it, whilst 64,815 voted for candidates [pp. 349-351].

On the whole, Mr. Oberholtzer's study confirms the belief that it is a mistake to expect the referendum or the initiative to be outstanding features of modern democratic methods, and an error to regard democracy from a point of view which necessitates an approval of the Swiss example. If representative government is a failure, there is no future for democracy.

J. R. MACDONALD.

LONDON.

THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF IMMORTALITY. By Stewart D. F. Salmond, D. D., Free Church College, Aberdeen. Third Edition. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. Pp. 709.

This book is in many respects a significant indication of the ethical life of our time. Though sufficiently intelligible to any person of good education, its elaborate details, with the careful and judicious manner in which these are treated, adapt it for the scholar more than for the general reader. Nor is there the slightest attempt to win for the subject any illegitimate attraction by the questionable artifices that are too common in its treatment. Even the devout imagination is not allowed the amiable indulgence in fictitious, though they may be ennobling, pictures of the reward to which virtue may look forward in a future life. Still less is there any suggestion of penetrating beyond the veil of futurity by the methods of contemporary spiritualism. The work of the Society for Psychical Research, its results or its hopes are not even mentioned. When all this is borne in mind, when it is further observed that Dr. Salmond's book is a stout volume of seven hundred pages of library octavo, it will be admitted to be a fact of significant interest, that it has entered into a third edition within eighteen months. Amid the almost despairing complaints that are often heard about the literary tastes of our day, it cannot but be encouraging to find that a work, appealing to so much that is best in the mental and moral life of the world, should meet with such a cordial reception.

This gratifying encouragement is enhanced by an examination of the book itself. As already stated, it is a book which appeals to the scholar. It is probably in fact the most scholarly contribu-

tion to the subject in recent literature; and it justifies the generous recognition it has received, not only from the reading public in general, but from men of competent critical power in particular. For its scholarship is not merely an outpouring of such erudition as sheer industry can accumulate. It is throughout imbued with that spirit of historical criticism, which has been the most potent influence in enhancing the results of scholarly research in the century that is gone. For is not the historical spirit, in the study of the past, an extension of the moral consciousness in the sphere of intellectual work, and thus a clearer view, a fuller mastery, of the moral task undertaken by the student? Is it not in fact a more honest endeavor to be just to our fellow-men of former ages by understanding them more truly, to estimate their achievements by the conditions under which they worked, and not by the distance which separates them from our ideals?

This spirit of historical fairness gleams through the whole of Dr. Salmond's inquiry, but is particularly conspicuous in his treatment of non-Christian religions. For though by its title his work is specially devoted to the Christian doctrine of immortality, yet more than two-fifths are occupied with pre-Christian ideas on the subject. He is led to this by the fact, that, though he does not obtrusively parade the ideas or methods of evolutionism, he yet recognizes that religious beliefs are, in some sense, products of a more or less gradual process of growth. The heathen, as well as the Hebrew, conceptions of immortality are, in his view, "preparations" for the Christian doctrine.

The First Book describes the various forms of the "ethnic" preparation. Here, after an introductory chapter, the ideas of the lower races are examined, then in succession those of India, of Egypt, of Babylonia and Assyria, of Persia, and finally of Greece, a separate chapter being given to each. These chapters afford, on every page, a fine illustration of the marked difference in the treatment of such subjects by the Christian scholar of the present day from that which was common at no distant period. Of course this is due in part to the vast extension of our knowledge in regard to religious beliefs, especially outside of ancient Greece and Rome; but it is impossible to ignore the more exacting moral sense of recent scholarship in regard to both thoroughness and candor. The old attitude of unsympathetic hostility to every non-Christian phase of religious life, and the easy method of dogmatic assertion or sweeping generality, have disappeared. Instead, there is the

kindly search after any trace of truth or goodness, there is conscientious industry in the endeavor to grasp obscure details, and to estimate all with critical insight into their real significance. If there is any fault to find with Dr. Salmond's account of non-Christian beliefs, it is a fault that is almost inevitable. The writer, who undertakes such an account, must do his best to make it intelligible; that is to say, he must make the beliefs he describes as clear as possible to the mind of a reader. But this can hardly ever be done without representing each article of faith as characterized by a definite uniformity which rarely belongs to any, and construing all the articles of a religious creed as forming a far more harmonious whole than they ever become in actual life. This is forcibly illustrated by the religion of ancient Greece. It is the product of a clearer intelligence than that of any other ancient people. It received brilliant treatment from artist, from poet, from philosophical allegorizer; and yet it remains a bewildering chaos of unconnected fancies which cannot be marshalled into intelligible order along any line of logical or natural law.

The general lack of logical clearness or harmony in actual religious beliefs is noticeable in regard to ideas of the future state in particular. Even Christian thought on the subject shows all gradations from a good-natured Universalism, which virtually eliminates moral retribution from the government of the world, to a hideous Pessimism which represents the moral history of man as an appalling failure. If such divergences occur within the domain of Christian doctrine, it seems a hopeless task to look for anything like fixed or consistent views of the future life in those phases of religious thought which lie outside of Christendom. It is but due to Dr. Salmond to say that he recognizes fully the difficulty of his theme. His statements are characterized in general by just caution which does not ignore the extreme uncertainty that obscures many points in his sketch. Probably the study of religions will increase this spirit of caution, and come to a more explicit recognition of the fact, that the religious consciousness in reference to futurity is often but an undefined sentiment that hardly tries or dares to shape itself into thought, and still less into any language that can admit of logical analysis.

There is, however, one fact which can with reasonable probability be gathered from Dr. Salmond's review of non-Christian beliefs on the subject; and that is the tendency to connect them more intimately with the moral consciousness by projecting into

a future life the realization of a perfect moral development for the individual and a perfect moral government for the race. By the very conditions of earthly life the retribution of human conduct appears to be hopelessly concealed, if not absolutely baffled; and this illusion must perplex the moral consciousness as long as retribution is sought in natural events that may lie outside of the moral life altogether. It is therefore an exceedingly natural evolution of thought, which points to an existence beyond the conditions of earthly life as a scene in which there will be a complete reconciliation of physical and moral well-being. This movement of thought seems indeed so logical, that it was regarded even by Kant as an irresistible postulate of practical reason. Among the various phases, which the movement assumed outside of Christendom, probably the Egyptian faith will in general be regarded as the earliest and most pronounced; and this fact raises an extremely perplexing problem with regard to the relation between the Egyptians and the Hebrews. The idea of a future judgment appears in very distinct form in recensions of the Book of the Dead belonging to the later reigns of the eighteenth dynasty, and there can be little doubt that it must have become a feature of religious thought in Egypt long prior to that period. [See Budge's "Book of the Dead," Vol. I., Introduction, p. xciii.] But the Hebrews cannot have left Egypt before that period; and yet the outlook towards an immortal life in any part of the Old Testament is so exceedingly vague, that many critics have gone the length of maintaining that it formed no part of the Hebrew religious creed. Dr. Salmond has devoted two or three pages (188-191) to a consideration of the subject, and these are characterized by his usual caution and fairness. But it must be acknowledged that there is here an unsolved problem in the history of ancient religions. Yet it must also be said that perhaps the problem may be found simple enough, if we get a few more historical data; for it seems to present merely one phase of the general fact, noticed by Renouf and other Egyptologists, that the Hebrews appear to have taken with them extremely few of the distinctive features of Egyptian civilization.

Perhaps the Hebrews had already begun to realize, in a dim way, that real retribution is not an act of divine judgment postponed to a period after the death of the individual or at the close of human history,—that, being involved in the eternal order of God's world, it is eternally going on; so that any future retribu-

tion can be but a continuation of the moral process which is already realized in earthly life. Dr. Salmond seems to indicate that that may be his own interpretation of the peculiar attitude of the Old Testament towards the idea of immortality. "It may be," he says, "that in it" (the Old Testament), "for the most part, piety has its field in this world, and faith its satisfaction in present relations to God" (page 191). In this respect the Hebrew attitude may be regarded as in truth the historical preparation for the teaching of Christianity, and as giving a clue to the interpretation of that teaching. It is scarcely necessary to say that the historical method of interpretation, which Dr. Salmond has adopted as his general guide, is applied specially in his interpretation of the teaching of Christ and the Apostles. Some critics would enforce that method more fully. Certainly in the interpretation of the language of the New Testament on the subject it seems almost impossible to make too large an allowance for the unavoidable forms of thought which are imposed upon all descriptions of moral retribution, not merely by the peculiar ideas of the Hebrews, but even by the ideas of men in general with regard to the forms of legal procedure in pronouncing and executing judicial sentences in human life. The divine judgment on the moral actions of men can have nothing of the arbitrary and artificial character that attaches to human judgment by the conditions of time and space within which all human activity is restricted; and if the necessities of thought and language compel us to describe divine judgment under human forms, these must not be allowed to blind us to the fact, that every man at every moment of his life stands truly before the judgment seat of God, and that he can never escape the irrevocable sentence which is pronounced on the deed done at the moment.

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CHRISTIANITY AND MYTHOLOGY. By John M. Robertson. London: Watts & Co. Pp. xviii., 484.

There is much in this volume which one can heartily admire. It shows large learning, great industry, and much critical skill. It consists of "three treatises," at each of which we shall glance in turn. Before doing so, however, one ought to say that Mr. Robertson claims to have been "more obedient to scientific canons"